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CENTRAL INTERGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Germany (Bussian Zone)

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SUBJECT

Summary of Operation Ossav

CONFIDER AL in accordance to the letter of 16 central celligence to the Director of Central tes.

13 January 1947

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ORIGIN

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- 1. The first reaction of the population of Berlin to the mass transfer of workers to Russis was to the effect that the deportations constituted the Russian answer to the elections of 20 October 1946, which the Russian-sponsored SED lost decisively. The scope of the Russian operation was so great, however, that it became obvious that the project must have been carefully planned by a large staff over a long period. This has since been confirmed by reports that Operation Ossavekin was organized by the "Seventh Administrative Bureau", which had been set up for this purpose; the Berlin part of the operation was under the direct supervision of the First Operation Group of the MVD in Luisenstraess, Berlin. The preparations included the hasty repair of many railroad cars.
- 2. The point most widely discussed, from the beginning, was whether or not the transportation of the German workers to Russia was voluntary. The first opinion of the majority of Berliners was that the shipments were a mass deportation in the manner of the late Fritz Sauckel. The Russian contention on the other hand was that all the workers affected had voluntarily signed contracts to work in Russia and that no force, pressure, or compulsion of any kind was used. Indeed, the Russians contrasted what they called "humane transportation of workers for peaceful industries" with the "forced deportation by Britain and the United States of hundreds of Nazis to work on secret atom-bomb projects". This charge was given streamer headlines and extensive write-ups in all the Soviet-controlled newspapers, while the newspapers licensed by the western allies continued with their more cautious stories comparing the Ossavskim project to the Nazi under-

Inquestionably, a considerable number of the skilled German labor involved in the Ossavakim project volunteered to move with their families to Emseia. It is balieved that a majority of the scientists and executives who were evacuated when went voluntarily. At the same time, all sources agree that the deportation was carried out in a manner not experienced in Germany except between the years 1933 and 1945, and state that whether or not contracts were signed, as claimed on the Soviet side, the actual shipments were made in an atmosphere of terror, isually in the very early morthing hours. Personnel of the MVD were alerted on 11 October, and "assisted" the Germans in the transfer of their belongings from their homes to the railway station. The great majority of the workers involved resided in the Eussian sector or zone, although some persons residing in the British and American sectors of Berlin were also taken. The latter were transported to the railway station directly from their place of work, and as a result could not take any personal belowings along on the trip.

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- While in most of the cases reported there seems to have been no warning, one subsource describes the following procedure: At the Askania Works in Berlin-Friedrichshagen, all the workers were assembled on the afternoon of 21 October. and a member of the Trade Union Council read them a statement approximately as follows: "Inasmuch as the factory where you are working is to be transferred to the Soviet Union, you are hereby instructed to prepare yourselves and your families for the journey to the U.S.S.R. You will all travel in coaches, while your belongings will be transported in freight cars. Hussian soldiers will assist you. Your new contracts will be signed upon arrival in the Soviet Union. Your working conditions will be the same as those of skilled nussian workers in similar positions. Your first contract will be for a period of five years. You will be supplied with food and clothing for the journey, which will last three or four weeks." After hearing this, the informant absented himself from his home in Prenslaver Berg; at 0300 hours that night two Russian solutors armed with submachine-guns called for him accompanied by a Cerman who claimed to be a representative of the Magistrat. They seerched his apartment, but left peaceably enough upon finding that he was not in,
- 5. Other persons were injured while attempting to escape or to resist deportation. In Tasdorf (VO4, east of Berlin), an engineer named Vogel is said to have been executed, together with his wife and two sons, because they resisted the attempt to ship them to Russia.
- 6. In the American sector of Berlin three civilians, described as Russians, tried to abduct a textile engineer, Heins Kämmerer, living in Britz at Körnerstrasse 37. He resisted, was severely beaten, and was saved only by the appearance of the policet his attackers escaped. British Public Safety authorities reported three kidnapping attempts in the British sector, one of which was successful.
- 7. The scope of Operation Ossavakim is difficult to estimate, but the number of people affected is probably in the hundreds of thousands. A tentative British estimate, made on 26 October, gave the number as over 250,000, but later reports suggested that this figure was much too low, especially if, as rumored, the project included not only war industries but also twenty per cent of "peaceful" industries.
- 5. Sources agree that the deportation of workers from the Soviet zone was carried out on a proportionately much larger scale and more ruthlessly than in Berlin. It is reported, for instance, that over five thousand individuals active in the machine tool industry in Chemnitz alone were taken. In Jena the Russian garrison was alerted and far-reaching defensive measures were takent highways leading out of town were blocked, railroad transportation came to a standstill, and telephone communications were out. In Hallowiietleben, about 0200 hours on 26 October, a housing colony occupied by workers of the Siebel aircraft factory was surrounded by a Soviet column which included amored cars, and the people concerned were given bout three hours to pack their belongings. Here no one had any previous notification, and considerable confusion resulted because there were not enough interpreters to explain to the people what was happening.
- 9. The operation continued for some days or weeks, and one source has reported that it will ultimately be extended to include doctors and nurses.

